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# AN ENQUIRY AFTER *Truth* and *Righteousness*,

## And after the People whom the Lord Establisheth and will Establish therein, in some Queries on *Isa.* 58. and also on Chapter 54.

*Query* 1. ARe there any people to be found, who exceed that state spoken of vers. 2. of seeking God daily, and delighting to know his wayes, as a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinance of their God? They ask of me said the Lord the Ordinances of Justice, they take delight in approaching to God. Are there not many Professions and sorts of Professors at this day, who in Gods sight fall short of this state, and yet think highly of themselves? yet these the Prophet of the Lord was not to spare, but to lift up his Voice like a Trumpet against them, because of their Transgression and Sin which they committed, notwithstanding their thus daily seeking the Lord.

Quer. 2. What was the Transgression and the Sins which the Prophet was not to spare them in, but lift up his Voice like a Trumpet against them for? Was it not (among other things) for their wrong fasting, their wrong afflicting their Souls, their wrong seeking of God, out of the meek, tender, merciful

ſpirit? Doth God require ſuch faſting or praying of any man? or will the Lord accept ſuch faſting or praying at any mans hand? Ah how many faſt and pray at this day, who never rightly conſidered nor truly underſtood what the faſtings and what the prayers are, which God requireth, and which alone he will accept?

Quer. 3. What is the faſt which God requireth, and will accept in all Ages? Is not this it, *To looſe the bands of wickedneſs, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppreſſed go free; to break every yoke &c. ver.* 6. 7. Who can underſtand or learn the faſt, but he that is taught of God?

Quer. 4. Are there any, whoſe light breaks forth as the morning, and whoſe health ſprings forth ſpeedily; and whoſe righteouſneſs goeth before them, and whom the glory of the Lord gathereth up, or is a Rereward to (as is promiſed to thoſe who obſerve this faſt) and whom the Lord is ready to hear and anſwer in all that they call upon him for, as ver. 8. 9? Doth not God teach his Children in the new Covenant to obſerve this faſt? And they who are taught by him to keep it (and do faithfully keep it) do they not inherit this Promiſe?

Quer. 5. Are there any now among the Sons of men, whoſe light hath riſen in obſcurity, and whoſe darkneſs hath become as noon-day? Whom the Lord guideth continually, and whoſe Soul he ſatisfieth in Droughts, and makes fat their bones: And makes them like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of water, whoſe Waters fail not? Surely if there be any, who are truly taught of the Lord to obſerve that which leads hereto, they cannot miſs of enioying theſe precious promiſes: For he is faithful and true who hath promiſed. (verſ. 10, 11.)

Quer. 6. Are there any, at this day, whom God honoureth in building the old waſte Places, in raiſing up the Foundations of many Generations; in repairing the breach, and reſtoring the Paths to dwell in? What are the Paths that are to be dwelt in? Are they not the ſame which the Soul is to walk in? Is not the

the juſt mans path and his dweling place all one, even the Light of the Living, which he is both to walk and abide in? See 1 Joh. 1. 7. and Prov. 4. 18.

It is ſaid concerning Chriſt, *He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk, even as he walked* 1 Joh. 2. 6. How did Chriſt walk? Did he not walk in the Light of Gods Spirit? in Subjection to Gods Spirit? Was not the fulneſs given him? Was not the Father alwayes with him? And did not he act in the Father, and the Father in and through him? Now, doth not he give forth a meaſure of the ſame Spirit, of the ſame Anointing, of the ſame Power to become Sons unto all his? and are not they to walk according to the meaſure of Light and Life they receive from him? And he that walks according to this rule, can he err in ſo walking? Is not this the pure Path, the living Path, the Path for the ranſomed in the dayes of the Goſpel, who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit; not in the oldneſs of the Letter, but in the newneſs of the Spirit? O that men could conſider this with the true underſtanding, and know the way of Life in the true ſenſe and experience thereof! That which enlightens and gives life to my Soul, is ſomewhat from Chriſt, even a meaſure or appearance of his pure Spirit; it is no leſs: and the Law of Life written inward is more to the Soul then words written outwardly, though all the words that ever come from Gods holy Spirit are very precious, and greatly uſeful, to thoſe, to whom he vouchſafeth to give the underſtanding of them.

Quer. 7. What is the Sabboth ſpoken of verſ. 13? Is it the Law-Sabboth, or the Goſpel-Sabboth? Is it inferior in nature to the Faſt before mentioned? What is Gods Holy-day, which is the Souls delight, the holy of the Lords honourable, wherein the Souls that enter into the true Reſt (by Faith in him who is Life) honour the Lord, in ceaſing from their own wayes, pleaſures and words? ſee alſo *Hebr.* 4. 3. and 10.

Qu. 8. They that keep Gods holy Sabboth, do they not delight themſelves in the Lord? do they not feel the pleaſure of his Day, and of his Appearance in his day? Are not theſe of the true Seed

of *Jacob* (who prevail with the Lord for the Blessing?) and doth not the Lord feed them with the Heritage of *Jacob* their Father, even with the Blessings of the Covenant of Life and Peace for evermore.

## *Some Queries on Isa* 54.

*Query* 1. IS there such a state to be witnessed, either in the particular, or in the general, wherein the Womb that was barren shall Travel and bear, and sing for joy of heart and spirit before the Lord? see vers. 1.

Quer. 2 Is there such a state to be witnessed, as of the Maker to become the Husband? Is not this a glorious state indeed, and a name better then of Sons and Daughters, signifying nearer intimacy and union, then any other relation, with the holy One, the Redeemer of *Israel*? and do not such as come to this state (even to be married to the Lamb) partake more abundantly of his redeeming Power and holy Presence? see vers. 6.

Quer. 3. Are there some so visited and redeemed by the Lord, as that they shall never be cast off more as that the floods of Wrath shall never overtake them more, nor the Covenant of their Peace removed? Ah precious state! blessed are they doubtless who have been so visited and redeemed by Gods mercy, as to be made partakes of it.

Quer. 4. Who is this that hath been afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted? Have there been any such in our days, who have been deeply afflicted, for want of the presence of the Lord God of their Life, who have been tossed up and down with tempest after tempest, and could meet with no Comforter to speak a word in season to their weary Souls? And hath the Lord appeared to these, visited these, built up these, comforted these? Surely then, the poor whom he hath raised out of the dust, and

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the needy whom he hath lifted [illegible] from the dunghil, cannot but praise his Name.

Quer. 5 Who is this, whose stones God layes with fair Colours, and her Foundations with Saphires? whose Windows God makes of Agates, and her Gates of Carbuncles, and all her Borders of Pleasant Stones? Was not the Covenant of Life so adorned in the Apostles days? and is she not so adorned now again?

Quer. 6. Whose children are they, who shall be all taught of the Lord, and whose peace shall be great, who shall be established in Righteousness, who shall be far from Oppression; so that they shall not fear, and from terror so that it shall not come neer them? Are there such a Generation of the heavenly Birth, of the Covenant of Life, brought forth in this our day, who sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, and make him their fear and their dread, but are not terrified with the wicked one, nor with the Snares and Engines of the ungodly? Surely they who are taught of God, have peace from him and in him, and are established in the righteous Spirit and life of his Son, they are like mount Sion, which cannot be shaken or removed, by all the Terrors and oppressing Devices of the ungodly.

Qu. 7. By whom do they gather together, who gather together against such a people? Certainly it is not by the Lord nor by any advice or counsel from him; but by the advise of that spirit which opposeth himself against the Power and Work of the Lord: And that spirit must fall for the sakes of those, whom God hath raised up by his Power, and undertaketh to defend. How tender was God of *Israel* after the flesh in the day of his delivering them, see 1 Chron. 16. 19. &c? and will he not be as tender of his Spiritual *Israel*, in the day of his redeeming and delivering them? Indeed the opposition will be very great, but consider who shall have the victory, See *Rev* 17. 14. Certainly it is true, and sealed by the Spirit of the Lord that Patience, Meekness, Innocency Love, Righteousness &c. shall at length overcome all Unrighteousness, Enmity, Oppression, Cruelty, Wrath &c, and that spirit from which they proceed: and as they are overcome, and when they are overcome

come, the Lamb's Spirit shall reign and shine in the glory of the Father. O the sweet Sense of this day and further hope thereof, how doth it bear up the suffering Lambs in the midst of all their Tryals and Tribulations!

Quer. 8. Hath not God created the Waster to destroy? and hath not he power over him? and doth not he limit him in the midst of his destroying work? But did God create him to destroy his heritage? Or will God suffer him so to do? they may indeed destroy the buildings which are not of God: But God is the wise, great, Master-builder, who counted his cost before he began and knew he was able to maintain his Building, against all the Oppositions and Opposors which could rise up against it.

Qu. 9. Can any weapon formed against the Covenant of Life and the Children thereof, who are taught of God and have great peace from him, and who are established by him in Righteousness; I say, can any weapon formed against these prosper? Every tongue that riseth up in judgment against them, doth not the holy Tongue condemn? Is not this the Heritage of the Servants of the Lord, in this our day? and doth not the Lord say (what ever men say to the contrary) that their Righteousness is of him? Indeed, who ever receiveth the true Righteousness, receiveth it from the hand of the Lord, and knoweth it to be of him. And this testimony we have, even from the Spirit of the Lord, who taketh away our Unrighteousness and filthy Garments, and giveth us Righteousness from and in his Son; that the righteousness which he giveth us, is his Sons Righteousness, even the very same wherewith the Son himself was clothed. For as the Seed is but one, and of one (*Heb.*2.11.) so the righteousness is but one neither. Be not hasty in spirit but wait to understand it in the Light and Spirit of the Lord, which is Wisdoms place of giving true understanding to her Disciples.

It is true, there hath been great Darkness, and the true Church hath been in the Wilderness, and the Remnant of her Seed hunted and persecuted up and down the Earth by the false Church, which hath been cried up for the true. But blessed be the Lord the Darkness is passing away, and the true Light shining again: which

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Light discovers and redeems out of all that is false, into that which is true: so that he that is truth and no lye is again known, and he speaketh truth and no lye, and anointeth with the true and holy Oyle of Life and Salvation, all that are truly living. And now the kingdom of Darkness is going down, and the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ raising up and exalting; which is an inward Kingdom, a spiritual Kingdom, a Kingdom of Life, a Kingdom of Peace, a Kingdom of Righteousness, a Kingdom of holy Power and Dominion over sin and death in the heart. And this will spread and increase, to the blessing of Persons, Families and Nations (as they come to be sensible of and subject to the Holy Light and Power thereof) which the Blessings of *Abraham*, wherewith all Families and Nations are to be blessed, as they come to be unleavened from the serpentine spirit and wisdom, and leavened with the Innocency and Righteousness of the Lambs Nature and Spirit.

The mighty God carry on his work, by the same mighty Arm of Strength wherewith he began it; and open the eyes of this Nation that they may see their proper hope and interest: for indeed the Lord hath great love to this Nation, and a blessing in store for it, (for the Seeds sake which he hath sown and caused to spring up in it,) though many tryals and tribulations must first be passed through, and the spirit of Enmity and Opposition against the appearance of Gods holy Spirit and Power worn out. O that men could come to that which gives the eye-sight, that thereby they might see a right, and no longer take the rise of their seeing from that spirit and wisdom which miss-represents things.

*Written in* Reading-Goal, *in the tender love, true innocency and uprightness of my heart; which the Lord hath given me to suffer with for his truths sake; About the latter end of the 4th Moneth,* 1671.

Isaac Penington.

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